Year One

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Year One

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Summary

There are means of influence other than violence.

A Ravenclaw with a rare and inconvenient talent for legilimency; a Slytherin who cannot speak, and thus cannot spell. Will Graham and Hannibal Lecter are strange boys who fall into a strange friendship in this Hogwarts AU, told through their journal entries.
Magic and all else aside, what could have been if they came into each other's lives at just the right moment. This is the first in a multi-fic series.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Chapter 1

Will

Professor Crawford suggested I start a journal.

Not a *diary*, specifically a journal. As if that makes it feel less silly.

"Write down your feelings," he said. "When you get overwhelmed, it will help you sort out which ones are really yours."

What am I feeling?

Tired.

Annoyed.

Anxious.

Check, check and check; those are all officially Will Graham's, no outside influence necessary. Then again, I am alone in the dormitory right now. There is a quiet, constant buzz of Other, but for now they are distant and easy to ignore.

Crawford is very interested in my "gift." It can't exactly be called legilimency, not when it comes naturally and constantly, others' emotions and memories forcing their way into you, them invading your mind rather than the other way around. A cup to be filled. But I'm sure that he, an ex Ministry man sees a certain potential in that. I wonder if he'd feel the same if he had ever been walking to class, minding his own business, when suddenly he finds he really *really* wants to kiss someone. The ghost of lips against yours, and you freeze, like an idiot, because your mind is torn between two places and one of them is very distracting, and then somebody shoves you, and people laugh, and they whisper, they always whisper. Like you don't hear them say it. Like you don't feel the curiosity and pity and disgust sloshing heavy around you all the time.

Freak.

Professor Crawford thinks I need to sort out my feelings. Having seen the inside of quite a few minds, I think I'm the only one who doesn't.

Chapter 2

Hannibal

Writing, writing. Yes, I am am writing, is it helping? Am I magically functional? Does it appear as though this ink forming words is doing anything but wholly wasting my time? Oh, I forget, they are not reading this.

ARE YOU READING THIS?

They say they will not. I am not quite certain about that.

I try to explain, on paper, but they don't listen, of course, because no voice means that nothing I think is enough, because I am still *damaged* - and the screams, I suppose, in the night. Those glasses that may or may not have shattered when I awoke last Thursday, of both seeing and drinking varieties in shards on the floor. (They all looked like teacups for one terrifying moment...She always loved -) But which fools do not put anti-breakable charms on their glass goods? It is not so difficult, theoretically. A little flick of the wrist, up approximately 35 degrees, to the right sharply in 120, the murmured whisper of the right words, surely *they* could all manage. And still, though the rest are the fools, I am the one they drag here to speak to.

In any case, I scream and I do not make noise with my lips unless it is the aforementioned, so I must write evidently. I have told them that it is not as such with me. I am perfectly in touch with how I feel - greatly put out, at present - and recalling any instances is not at issue. It is all organized with great detail and tucked away and none of it involves any journal or quill.

So why the screams? I know that is what they think as they sigh and look at me; why the muteness? I confess that I clench my fists and likely glare, though it is not of much use. One must be calm with grownups, smile and allow them to believe their wisdom, but really, writing in this useless thing regularly, I might have turned their thoughts to once a month with a little patience. But they ambushed me. Unfair to pull me from screams and offer me this.

"*You are endangering your mind, Mr. Lecter.*" If I could speak, my voice would be mimicking in a not altogether pleasant tone at this moment. "*And all those around you. And if you wish to stay* -"

Well, of course, I wish to stay. When all of this fades, and I can force my perfectly useable vocal chords into proper speech, I must have magic. The theory is all there, the base of it. Even though they frown when I make motions but no effort to speak. So I will write. I will not write about the screams. I will not write about my "emotions." I will have the most arduous observations for their prying eyes. This entry, I suppose exempt. Perhaps I should rip it up and replace it with a treatise on the inner working of frog's eye anatomy and its many uses. But, why on the other hand, should I do so.

In any case, it is time for class. So I go. Lateness is never excusable. Some professors, if they might be reading, would do well to recall this too.

-H.L.

Chapter 3

Will

I HATE PAUL KRENDLER. I HATE PAUL KRENDLER. I HATE PAUL KRENDLER.

He and his friends caught me coming out of the bathroom after lunch today. I could feel their… their want to hurt coming off of them in hot, choking waves. It tasted like mud, like old crawling things that only know survival and fear. He wants them to think he's cool, so a first year's tears don't mean anything to him as long as they're laughing.

They threw my books on the ground and turned the tap on, clogged the sink so that water ran over the rim and all over them until they were soggy and useless. When I shouted for them to stop, my voice cracked and they laughed. When I said "Fuck you," they laughed even harder. They held my arms and I watched the words bleed away.

When they got bored, as I knew they would, they threw the whole mess in the toilets, laughing still and hissing *Mudblood*. I just sat where they left me until they were done, not wanting them to see me cry. I kept thinking about how mad Dad would be if I asked for new ones, and knew already that I couldn't do that. I know how hard he's worked just to scrape enough together to get me here. I saw the bags under his eyes, never enough coffee in the mornings, and more, I can *feel* his shame when he sees me wearing too-short jeans, or when he says, overly cheerful "Let's go eat at Memaw's tonight, okay?" because the pantry is bare. I protect him as much as he does me. There will be no new books.

Chapter 4

Hannibal

“Hanni. Hanni.”

That wholly irritating tone contingency is at it this evening, even if it is from very far away, simpering sweet like the basest of poisons, the kind that any fool might make, glowing faintly magenta, smelling too overtly sweet to be anything but suspicious. Nothing of the scentless, invisible, variety, that would blend unseen until death strangles. No. The cheapest of ingredients and their hunger for torment smells of it, cloying even the notes of Tchaikovsky's violins as they melt away most of the scene.

Yes, yes, I *have* heard of Tchaikovsky, it might be that my blood is, well, my house would refer to it as *pure*, but I am not ignorant of Muggle ways. Pure is a foolish notion by my estimations however, declared so by people who don’t seem have a very good grasp of science, likely do not even know what it is. My blood is an aqueous liquid, plasma, in which blood cells and platelets are suspended. And spilled, I can be quite assured, it looks just as anyone else’s. Just as *theirs* would; I would be more than happy to demonstrate for them again if they dare to get any closer than their faraway simpering tones.

“*Awww, are you keeping a widdle diary because you’re sad*?”

Quality.

In any case—their blood. At first they thought simply because I could not speak, and so could not spell, they could wheedle without repercussion. (I am not “small for my age” - I have simply been stunted by factors outside my own control.)

But it is terribly difficult to grip a wand with broken fingers. They had been unaware of that fact, much as they are unaware of largely anything but their own foolish existences, and I do believe in education where it is necessary. The one I had at the orphanage was relatively enlightening, and certainly, though no smarter, *those* fools were much more ready to dirty themselves in their torments. Broken fingers, jabbed eyes, a crooked nose. Dull. And easily fixed here, regrettably. With much more crying to mommy, daddy, and the headmaster. Not worth my time if avoidable, which means unless they are foolish enough to touch or take.

No one takes.

No one touches.

(Even these basic lessons they forget, but for such transgressions, I will remind them.) But words? I turn the music louder in my head and forget about them.

“Is it because you’re a stupid, baby, freak? Only freaks iron their ties.”

It astounds that they haven’t tired of it yet. But each of them seem to be the one determined to finally “break me.” They perhaps are a bit late for that. But as I said. I have no intention of saying much here.

Goodnight.

H.L.

Chapter 5

Will

Well, any hope of a social life I had (ha) is dead.

Today, we were pruning Roses in Potions for the fifth years to use in love potions (apparently a very important lesson for survival in the Wizarding World, flower cutting). I was tired, had been up late trying to finish my Charms assignment without the use of my book (thanks again, Krendler) and irritable, because I knew it was going to be a lot of the same for the next three months. I never thought I would be so eager to come home from *magic schoo*l, but I am looking forward to summer. Anyways, the potions master told us what page to turn our books to, and I just sat there like an idiot, hoping she wouldn't say anything.

"Where is your book, Mr. Graham?"

Of course.

I felt my face grow hot. Somewhere in the back, someone laughed; I didn't turn to see who. The professor's face was stern, then soft, as she realized.

"Well," she said, and it didn't take empathy to sense the stiff embarrassment in her voice, "You'll have to get a new one. For today, you can share with Mr. Lecter."

I looked dubiously at the boy next to me. We've sat at the same desk all year, and he's never said a word to me. I'm not sure he's ever said a word to anyone. Some kids say he's a squib, but I've seen him cut and dice and juice and stir until the Potions Master croons over his perfect brews, and he allows a small smile. He's no squib. Then again, casting is difficult if you can't speak. A lot of kids make fun of him for that. They think he's smug, and they hate him, talk about him too loudly, not caring if he hears the words they throw.

I don't hate him, but the fact that he's so good at Potions is enough to make me want to punch him. Six months after coming here and I still can't brew a damn thing.

He didn't even look at me, when everyone got to work. He nudged his book over so that I could see it too, but then he just went on snipping the sharp little barbs like I wasn't there. His eyes were far away, like he was listening to music. A happy pariah. I envy him now, too. I wish that I didn't want approval.

I could feel gazes on us, two freaks, and hear the whispers. All I could think was *good.*

"Thanks," I said, not knowing if he could hear me, not caring if they could. He did look at me then, with surprise, and then he blinked, nodded his head *ever so slightly*, and went back to his task.

Chapter 6

Hannibal

Thanks.

I turn the word over in my head, now, as I am supposed to be focused on practicing the motions for the Mobiliarbus charm. I practice in empty classrooms between my own studies; it is much easier, without so many ugly eyes on me. Without the background dim of titters and whispers.

Not that I particularly care about any of that, but in class I must be present, cannot simply retreat to the inner halls of my mind where *I* know the key to my successful mastery lies. After all, there I have every memory I might need to draw from to perfect my motions. But instead, in this precious time, I am sitting here writing in you. And you are not even a you, you are a thing. I am writing in this thing, that I am foolishly now referring to as a you, and wasting my time.

But the *Thanks* will not fade and no corner of my mind reveals to me why the echo remains. Perhaps it was because the expected reaction was the predictable. *Why must I share with him? He doesn't speak, he's a freak, he thinks he's better than all of us*. (For the record I do, I am.) *It will completely ruin my whole entire pathetic existence if I am forced to share the same air*. (God forbid.) I was, the point being, wholly prepared for the usual litany of he will make me a social pariah and the subject of great mockery if I am forced to associate, Merlin and every deity save me, but none of that came.

I am not typically surprised.

In truth, I have not paid great attention to my seatmate. I can tell a few things from his dress and his manner: poor, the tightness of his clothes on several occasions, and the state, had said, muggle born, the brands point out. Hardworking, as he has managed to keep up with me without any altercation to this point, occasionally hopeless, though he has done a few things over, even if quietly and without complaint, the terrible sauce stains on the front of his shirt that have nothing to do with money and everything with haplessness. But he has never struck as anything but another peer to ignore.

But the *Thanks*. Said as though to anyone else, even toned, with a bit of a smile. If anyone bothers to speak in my direction it is usually as though they are speaking to a particularly ignorant toddler. Because if I do not speak, then obviously, I cannot hear, or comprehend. Stunning minds we are giving magic over to, truly. There was strange, sudden, I do not know, kinship? Enough to make me acknowledge him, if only because I am so rarely acknowledged myself and there was something in it that pulled.

But likely. He isn't anything at all. A display of stupidity, not companionship. Perhaps he didn't know what his proper response should be. Someone will set his misconceptions. And I have a charm to finish perfecting.

You are not a you. You are an it.

H.L.

Chapter 7

Will

I really need to put a good jinx on this book.

I was stupid enough to be carrying it in my bag today, and I ran into Beverly. Literally. My stuff went everywhere; quills and parchment, and some of those little strawberry candies that Memaw sent me. I'm lucky it was her, she just laughed and helped me while I scrambled to gather everything back together.

"Where were you, Graham?" she asked, tapping me on the forehead. She wasn't angry, just curious. I like Bev, her mind feels clean and warm, like it's humming with cogs and gears, always working. She teases, but she's never serious, has never made me feel out of place or awkward. (Well, any more than can be helped.)

She also makes this ridiculous uniform look really good. Her loose tie says "casual and fun" where mine usually just seems like it screams "not enough sleep and on the verge of a breakdown," and even though she opts for the trousers rather than a skirt, it's hard not to notice that she has really nice legs. Her friend—the one always shadowing her, with the dark hair and perpetually confused face—*definitely* notices.

"Oh, uh, sorry. Someone was bickering in the hall," I explained, when she raised her brows like she really expected an answer. I smiled, and hoped it looked charming, not manic. "I was trying to practice the occlumency Crawford's been working on with me, before I started yelling obscenities in the middle of the corridor."

Her mouth twitched, amused, and her eyes got that glittery look that sometimes makes me wonder what it'd be like to kiss her.

"Not much good if you can't walk and practice at the same time, is it?" she said, outlining my entire problem with occlumency in one sentence. I'd been struggling to express this to Crawford earlier today, in fact, that it works fine in the classroom because it's the *only thing I have to focus on.*

She picked up my journal.

"Ooh, what's this? The Life and Times of Will Graham?"

I tried to snatch it out of her hands, but she was too quick, and has a good few inches on me in reach.

"It's not—" I started, knowing it was hopeless. I really *really* didn't want her reading it though, she's like the one person who talks to me like a normal human being, I don't want her seeing what goes on in my mind, and I'd rather not have her know the details of my pathetic encounter with Krendler.

"*Follow one man's journey through the perils of life as a wizard teen*," she said, voice low and dramatic, "*Mystery, intrigue*... romance?" She wiggled her brows. She flipped to a random, blank

page, and I thanked god that most of them are empty still.

“Bev, don’t,” I said, meeting her eyes. I don’t do that a lot, it’s too easy to get pulled in that way, the tug of someone else’s emotions, memories, musings. She must have noticed, or heard something in my voice, because her face fell, serious, and she closed it, offering it in front of her.

“I wouldn’t,” she shrugged, “I was just messing around.”

She was embarrassed, I could tell. I felt my face flush in response; I didn’t want to make her feel bad. I took it back with an overly dramatic swipe, and grinned.

“Besides, you’ve got to leave me some mystery. Otherwise, what will we talk about?”

She smiled back, genuine, and I loved her for it. For the easiness I felt around her.

“Believe me, Graham, you’ve got plenty of that.”

I’m still trying to decide if that’s a good thing.

Chapter 8

Hannibal

They have done it again.

It is impossible to know who. Not without severely dismantling most of the current Slytherin house and a few chosen Ravenclaws. Which is why I am writing, because I have really no doubt at all that if I saw any one of them, it doesn't matter which face, innocent, guilty, that would be enough. And our common room would soon be very mistakable for Gryffindor, with all the scarlet that would be drenching the walls.

The shaking has passed, the long, silent, bout of staring faded to a more palatable numbness, but I am still - the fury is ready, it is strong, it wants nothing more than to escape, and to be furious is to have allowed them to be victorious. I will not rip their lungs, breathing, from their bodies, though I admit, it aches of temptation it likely should not. (Do you read that, fools? Are you still reading? You cannot fault me for my thoughts.) But I will *not* allow them to win.

The covers are shredded. The house elves will replace them, tomorrow, likely, they know I cannot fix it myself, but for now they are in tatters, the sheets pulled away, wrinkled, muddied, *dirty*. The pillows punctured and on the ground. I do not have to look to know my books are ripped, my notes drenched, the careful order of my shirts undone and tossed about, everything out of its correct place, everything gone from where I had neatly placed it, at one point or another. There is nothing of value, exactly, nothing that means anything to me that I cannot replace if needed. But the damage, the burn of the mess they have turned my possessions into... Sometimes, they are not nearly as stupid as I like them to be.

The order is important. It is important to me. I was not pleased at the notion of once again sharing a living space when I first came here, fresh from the short-lived stay at my Aunt's lovely house. I like my doors and my locks. And though this is nothing like the rock beds of the orphanage, the overlapping of others' into what is mine - I have no taste for that, I never will - I have sworn to never be sloppy again. To never be dirty or careless. And while this is not me, this is not my doing, these are my belongings, and they have been scattered and shredded on the floor.

I- it rings of something deep in the dark places. It is *agonizing*, throbs the beginning of a headache merely looking. And here I am, writing to you, instead of ripping you, or incinerating, as might be more altogether satisfying, though you are mine now and there have been enough casualties this evening. So I suppose you have passed your test.

Well, to work. Everything to order once more, before they return, so I can sit calmly on my bed of tatters and they can wonder, when it is exactly retribution will arrive. One day, it will all be jinxed and they will live to regret.

-H.L.

Chapter 9

Chapter Summary

Originally posted on my art blog, here

End Notes

We have taken many liberties with the world of Hogwarts in the course of this fic, so proceed with the notion that this is merely supposed to capture the essence of that place (something that is very close to both of our hearts) while exploring a universe in which Will and Hannibal come into each other's lives at a much more fortuitous time than in canon. Some rules will be bent.

That being said, here's a few facts for the curious:

-Yes, they are the same age in this verse
-This fic takes place in roughly present day, so it's post-war HPverse.
-Will is still from Louisiana
-We specifically chose not to directly reference any of JK's characters, but that's not to say they don't exist :)

Also, a thanks to cognomen for being the first to read this beast of a work, and giving us wonderful feedback. (And putting up with me talking about it constantly)

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!